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El Salvador

Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards

Export Certificate

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Report Highlights:

This report contains updated Salvadoran requirements for export certificates needed to import food and beverage products into the local market. Following these requirements will avoid unnecessary trade delays for U.S. exporters seeking to access this market.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
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Section I. Export Certificates Required and Products Covered, Section II. Purpose of Specific Export Certificate (s) and Section III. Specific Attestations Required on Export Certificate (s).

The Ministry of Agriculture's (MAG) Animal & Plant Health Inspection Division (DGSVA) awards import permits for animal and plant products. In addition, all imported processed products must be registered at the Ministry of Health's (MPHSA) Environment Safety Division (DSA).

In general, most products are subject to lab tests when undergoing routine controls and when the product is registered. The GOES requires that importers be registered with the MPHSA. Importers must also register each product to be imported with the MPHSA to ensure the product is fit for human consumption. A product that is registered undergoes physical, chemical, microbiological and other related tests to determine that it meets minimum health and sanitary standards. Product registration usually takes two to three weeks. Registration of a product, once granted, is valid for five years. The MPHSA is working on a project to have import permit formats online and linked to Customs to expedite food import procedure. MAG is also developing an online import permit system.

Certificates of Free Sale are required for those imported products not registered with the MPHSA. A certificate of free sale, ideally, is a certificate from an authorized public health agency that stated that the product to be imported meets all health and sanitary requirements of that agency and it is freely sold and consumed in the country of origin. The certificate can include more than one product and is valid for one year. The certificate must be in Spanish or be accompanied by a copy of an official translation that can be provided by the importer. Radiation Certificates are required for products that have been irradiated.

Food groups such as baby food, diet foods, and health foods undergo the same required regulations as the rest. In the case of meat zoosanitary regulations are required. These regulations are enforced by DGSVA through the Law for Sanitary Inspection of Meat (Executive Decree # 39, 07/13/71). Meat and meat products can be imported from any country whose meat inspection system is equivalent to and as efficient as the one established and maintained in El Salvador. Under the CAFTA-DR agreement El Salvador recognized the U.S. meat inspection system as equivalent. Each shipment that contains meat and meat products from a foreign country must include an official certificate of meat inspection from the country of origin in Spanish. In addition, to obtain the import permit, meat-processing plants must be inspected and certified by a DGSVA inspector and importer must present a lab analysis for pesticide residue and heavy metals. In addition, due to recent BSE outbreak in the U.S., DGSVA is requiring that the Export Certificate contain the following additional remarks: "Boneless meat from cattle 30 month or younger, that have had all Specified Risk Materials (SRM's) removed and not mechanically deboned". Dairy products also must contain a microbiological lab analysis. There are no special packaging or container size requirements in El Salvador.

In the past, while all of the above requirements were official government policy, few were actually enforced. Most products were not registered. Importers had been able to import the majority of all processed products with a notarized letter from the manufacturer stating the product is fit for human consumption. Recently, the MPHSA has been enforcing the product registration requirement and does not allow any imported food product into the country without having fulfilled this requirement. The cost for product registration at the MPHSA is \$ 35.00. In addition, microbiological analysis must be conducted for every food product that needs to be registered. The cost for this analysis ranges from \$50 to \$100 per product.

According to the Health Authorities in El Salvador, the following information is required for an exporter to register a product:

- An application must be filed at the DSA of the MPHSA (Departamento de Sanidad Ambiental, Ministerio de Salud Publica y Asistencia Social), which shall include the following information:
 1. Petitioner's name and address.
 2. Description of the product.
 3. Name, address and telephone number of the establishment or factory where the product is manufactured.
 4. Use that the product will have.
 5. Name, address and telephone of the supplier in El Salvador.
- This application must be filed with the following documents:
 1. Power of attorney granted in favor of the Salvadoran attorneys or the company representative in the country, duly notarized at the nearest Consulate of El Salvador in the U.S. or by Apostille.
 2. The product Registration Certificate of the exporting country duly notarized at the nearest consulate of El Salvador or by Apostille.
 3. Regarding the product samples, the Environmental Safety Division requires 3 samples of the solid product weighing 200 grams each.
 4. For liquid products, the Ministry of Health requires 3 samples of the product of 200 milliliters each.
 5. A Certificate of Free Sale of the product, issued by the Health Authorities of the country of origin, duly notarized at the nearest Salvadoran Consulate or by Apostille. It must contain the product's registration number and the manufacturing state of country.
 6. Functioning license of the local warehouse where the product will be stored, usually the local distributor obtains this license.
 7. Two original labels of the product to verify if they conform to the requirements established by the National Council for Science and Technology (CONACYT) for the Obligatory Salvadoran Norm (NSO): General Norm for labeling of pre-packaged food products R-UAC 67.01.02:02.
 8. Ingredient list in decreasing order according to product formulation. Only quantify flavoring, colorants, emulsifiers, preservatives, sweetener, and any other contained in the product according to national or international norms. All other ingredients must be described in a qualitative manner.

A representative or local distributor generally does the product registration procedure.

For additional information on food import regulations please refer to El Salvador's Food and Agricultural Import Regulations and Standards report (ES6005) at www.fas.usda.gov under Attaché Reports.

The following table contains a list of official export certificates required for imported products.

Product (s)	Title of Certificate	Attestation Required on Certificate	Purpose	Requesting Ministry
Dairy	Health and Origin	None	Health Certificate	Agriculture
Red Meat (Beef)	Veterinary Health and Origin	Veterinary Health Certificate must include: "Product does not contain brain, eyes, spinal cord, tonsil, thymus, spleen, intestines, spinal glands, trigeminal nerve, skull, spinal column, nor its protein by-products; and must have been retrieved from the carcass under appropriate sanitary conditions. Must proceed from cattle of 30 month or younger, boneless, with all Specified Risk Materials (SRM's) removed and not mechanically deboned".	Health Certificate	Agriculture
Red Meat (Pork)	Veterinary Health and Origin	None	Health Certificate	Agriculture
Poultry	Health and Origin	Official sanitary certificate must be accompanied of original proof specifying the following: "Birds and poultry facilities are free of New Castle, Avian Influenza, Laryngotraqueitis and Pseudotuberculosis/Typhoid." An official or private vet	Health Certificate	Agriculture

		specifying clearly the name, address, telephone and professional registry number must issue the original proof.		
Seafood	Health and Origin	None	Health Certificate	Agriculture
Grains	Phytosanitary and Origin	"Product has been inspected and is free of pests". For rice: "Product is free of Tilletia Barclayana".	Health Certificate	Agriculture
Flours	Phytosanitary and Origin	"Product has been inspected and is free of pests".	Health Certificate	Agriculture
Vegetables (Processed, Frozen or Preserved)	Origin Free Sale	None None	Health Certificate Food Safety	Agriculture Health
Vegetables/Fruits (Fresh), Flowers and Foliage	Phytosanitary and Origin	"Product has been inspected and is free of pests. Product originates from areas free of Maconelicoccus hirsutus and Thrips palmi". For grapes: "Product is free of pink mealy bug".	Plant Health	Agriculture
Ornamental Plants	Phytosanitary and Origin	"Plants have been inspected and are free of pests. Plants are free of soil residues or are packed using inert substance".	Plant Health	Agriculture
Planting Seeds	Phytosanitary and Origin	"Seeds have received chemical treatment and are duly certified."	Plan Health	Agriculture

Section IV. Government Certificate's Legal Entry Requirements.

- Does the original certificate need to accompany the product at the time of entry?

Yes. However an authenticated and Salvadoran consulate approved fair copy will be accepted.

- How long is the certificate valid? Can the certificate be applied to multiple shipments?

If product is introduced through Acajutla Port the phyto and zoo sanitary certificates are valid for three months and for 30 days if introduced through any other official point of entry. Certificate for grains is valid for 6 months.

- Will the country accept a Suppliers or Manufacturers Export Declaration as proof of compliance?

No.

- Will the foreign country accept a U.S. State issued export certificate?

Yes, origin export certificates are accepted from U.S. State official institutions.

- Will the country derogate export certificates? Which certificates? How do you apply?

No.

Section V. Other Certification/Accreditation Requirements.

Product	Sanitary Requirement
Dairy	Milk must proceed from establishments that have no sanitary restrictions. Plant must be approved by DGSVA and country of origin. Plant must base its activities on Codex Norms FAO-OMS and should include a program for microbiological control, physical-chemical, pesticides and heavy metals. Milk must be pasteurized or submitted to a 60 days maturity process indicating that it's apt for human consumption. Upon arrival at port of entry, an approved disinfectant in the country of destination must be applied to packing material. The product must carry a label that should contain at least the following characteristics: a) Product classification, b) Ingredients in decreasing order according to proportion, c) Additives indicating function in the product, d) Expiration date in a visible place, e) Lot identification, as well as production year, month and day which could be in code in a visible place, f) Manufacturers name and address, g) Must declare name of country where product was manufactured, h) Net content in units according to international measuring system, I) Corresponding registration number and j) Vehicles and containers used for transportation must meet all conditions necessary for the optimal maintenance of cold chain; must be washed and disinfected previous to shipment with products authorized by both exporting and importing country, and sealed with a customhouse stamp that can only be removed by DGSVA inspectors.
Red Meat (Beef)	Must proceed from establishments that have no sanitary restrictions. The slaughter facility must be approved for exports and officially recognized by the importing country, based on Codex Alimentarius FAO-OMS with relation to ante and post mortem. Must be certified by sanitary officials from the exporting country as being safe for human consumption and have official veterinary inspection. Adequate refrigeration and packaging with a seal of inspection and identification of the origin establishment. Must present lab analysis results for pesticide residue, heavy metals and microbiology in accordance with a sampling

	<p>program. Demonstrate the existence of a surveillance system that allows for identification of the herd where beef proceeds from, using a permanent tracking system that permits locating the mother and herd of origin. Proceed from cattle that have not been born from animals that are affected or supposedly affected by Bovine Spongiform Encephalitis (BSE), or that have been born after the prohibition of feeding with bone and beef meal. Proceed from cattle that have been born, raised and remained in herds where no BSE case has been confirmed within the last seven years. Cattle will be submitted to an ante mortem inspection. No air or compressed gas guns have been used to sacrifice the cattle. The MAG division from Inspection of Animal Origin Products (IPOA) will inspect the product upon arrival at the destination country.</p>
Red Meat (Pork)	<p>Animals must have been born, raised and exported in the exporting country. Farms must maintain a Zoosanitary control program under professional vet supervision. Farms must be free of: Aujeszky, Atrophic Rhinitis, Brucellosis, Transmissible Gastroenteritis, Digenesis and Respiratory Syndrome and Triquinelosis. Must proceed from slaughtering facilities that are authorized for exports by the country of origin and based on Codex Alimentarius FAO-OMS. Facility must be previously certified by DGSVA. Must be certified by sanitary officials from the exporting country as being safe for human consumption and have official veterinary inspection. Must be packaged in food grade materials. Package must include product identification, facility where product was processed, authorization number awarded by official sanitary authority, lot number, production and expiration dates. Vehicles and containers used for transportation must meet all conditions necessary for the optimal maintenance of cold chain; must be washed and disinfected previous to shipment with products authorized by both exporting and importing country, and sealed with a customhouse stamp that can only be removed by DGSVA inspectors.</p>
Poultry	<p>Imports are only allowed from countries or areas free of the following diseases: New Castle, Avian Influenza, Laryngotraqueitis and Pulorosis/Tifosis. Farms must have a zoosanitary control program under professional vet supervision and slaughter facility be free of the following diseases: s. pullorum, s. gallinarum, s. tiphimutium, s. enteritidis, s. gallisepticum and s. Sinoviae pasteurilla. The slaughter facility must be inspected and officially approved for exports by the importing and exporting country, based on Codex Alimentarius FAO-OMS with relation to ante and post mortem and sanitation of fresh meat. The birds from where the product proceeds are not subject to sanitary restrictions and have presented negative results to tests for: Newcastle isolation, hemoagglutination inhibition (hi) and/or immunodifusion in agar gel for avian influenza, rapid agglutination in plaque and isolation for avian salmonellosis (s. pullorum and s. gallinarum) and ELISA for infectious avian laryngotraqueitis. Imports must proceed from birds raised in the country of origin. Must be certified by sanitary officials from the exporting country as being safe for human consumption. That have been packaged in new boxes made of carton or plastic, satisfying the disinfection requirements and that after this process were not exposed to contamination. Must exhibit clearly farm of origin identification, lot number, production date, and have an official seal that establishes that containers or transportation vehicles have been washed and disinfected using authorized products by the country of origin. Conditions for maintaining the cold chain must be met and sealed with a customhouse</p>

	stamp that can only be removed by DGSVA inspectors. IPOA will inspect product upon arrival at the destination country.
Seafood	Shrimp must proceed from an authorized facility in the country of origin. Facility must carry out its activities based on Codex Alimentarius FAO-OMS norms. Whenever DGSVA considers appropriate, a joint inspection and approval visit with the official sanitary authority in the country of origin will be conducted. Imports are allowed from countries or areas free of the following diseases: White spot, yellow head and TSV. Whenever MAG consider necessary, samples can be taken from each shipment for sanitary analysis, quarantine and toxic residues. Product must include in the package a label that includes at minimum the following characteristics: a) Product designation and classification, b) ingredient names in decreasing order according to proportion, c) Additives indicating function in the product, d) Expiration date in an appropriate and visible place, e) lot identification, manufacturing year/month/day which can be in code in an appropriate and visible place, f) Manufacturer's name or establishment under which the brand is sold, as well as the establishment's address, g) Manufacturing country, h) Net content in units of the international measuring system and I) Corresponding registration number. Conditions for maintaining the cold chain must be met and sealed with a customhouse stamp that can only be removed by DGSVA inspectors. For additional information or assistance with seafood import requirements please contact the U.S. Department of Commerce/Foreign Commercial Service.
Grains	Quarantine treatment will be applied at origin and respective proof will be required. If during inspection at point of entry live pests are found, a new treatment will be applied.
Flours	Product will be inspected at point of entry and a quarantine treatment will be applied if during inspection live pests are found.
Vegetables/Fruits (Fresh), Flowers and Foliage	Product will be inspected at point of entry.
Ornamental Plants	Product will be inspected at point of entry and a quarantine treatment will be applied if during inspection live pests are found. In some cases the CITES certificate must be presented.
Planting Seeds	The variety, brand and lot number must be specified. Seed will be sampled at the warehouse before being commercialized. Biotech seeds are prohibited.

Appendix I. Outline of the Content of Each Certificate and U.S. Government Agency Required to Sign It.

Health Certificate for processed products required by Ministry of Health needs to be signed by FDA. For processed products containing more than 3 percent of meat/poultry and eggs certificate must be signed by FSIS.

Any official institution authorized by exporting country can sign Certificate of Origin.

Phyto and Zoo Certificates must be signed by a USDA inspector.